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Ecstasy and Predatory DRUGS



www.dea.gov



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Visit the DEA web site at www.dea.gov to learn more about legalization, drug abuse, drug crime, drug addiction, and other drug-related issues.

Ecstasy & Predatory Drugs
is also available at the DEA website:
www.dea.gov/concern/clubdrugs.html

From the Administrator

The Chemistry That Can Kill



“Party Drugs” is a general term for a number of illegal drugs that are popular on the youth scene. They’re commonly encountered at nightclubs and “raves,” but are now also found in homes and at private parties. These drugs include MDMA (Ecstasy), Ketamine, GHB, and methamphetamine, and have gained popularity primarily from the false perception that they are not as harmful, or as addictive, as mainstream drugs, such as cocaine and heroin.

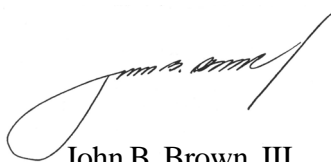
Contrary to this perception, party drugs pose serious health risks, including long-term damage to the brain, short-term damage to the heart and kidneys, and even sudden death. Their quality may vary significantly, and customers can often be duped as drug substitutions occur when suppliers cannot provide drugs currently in demand. That can complicate the task of emergency medical personnel, who might not know what drugs a patient admitted for overdosing has ingested.

A second set of drugs, notably GHB, GBL, 1,4 BD, and Rohypnol, have been used in the commission of sexual assaults and other crimes of violence: they render a victim incapable of resisting and may cause memory problems that complicate case prosecution. As a result, these and other drugs like them, have been called “predatory drugs.”

Party drugs have sneaked up on American society much like cocaine did in the 1970s. And the June 5, 2000, cover story in *Time* magazine gives an explanation why when it stated, “One reason Ecstasy is so fascinating, and thus dangerous to anti-drug crusaders, is that it appears to be a safer drug than heroin and cocaine, at least in the short run, and appears to have more potentially therapeutic benefits.”

A similar story appeared in *Newsweek* in 1977, arguing that a newly popular drug was “not addictive and causes no withdrawal symptoms.” When taken in moderation, *Newsweek* said, the drug “probably causes no significant mental or physical damage and a number of researchers have concluded that it can be safer than liquor and cigarettes when used discriminately.” The drug in question was cocaine, and unfortunately, the magazine’s assessment was dead wrong.

Newsweek’s editors were no doubt rendering an honest judgment about what was popularly known at the time about cocaine. But the truth is, the hard evidence about new drugs often comes out well after the stories promoting their glitz and glamour. As a result, the general public often doesn’t learn about the dangers of new drugs until it is too late. In fact, while 92 percent of parents have heard about Ecstasy, half of those parents are unaware of the drug’s dangerous effects. And just one percent of those parents say it’s possible that their teen may have tried the drug, even though 12 percent of teens, or 2.6 million, have already done so. Correcting these and other misperceptions about party and predatory drugs is one of the mandated missions of the DEA. With this booklet we hope to inform parents and teenagers of the dangers of party and predatory drugs; make parents aware of the signs of Ecstasy and party drug use; protect the unsuspecting from becoming victims of predatory drug-assaults; and provide recommendations for what you, the reader, can do to help in the battle against these dangerous substances.



John B. Brown, III
Deputy Administrator

Executive Summary

Most Americans know the very real dangers and tragic consequences of using drugs like cocaine, heroin, and PCP, and the majority choose to stay away. But there is a startling array of new synthetic party drugs like Ecstasy and predatory drugs with chemical sounding names like GHB, GBL, and 1,4 BD that are fast becoming the number one drug threat to America's youth—largely because kids believe these laboratory-produced pills are harmless.

Looks Can Be Deceiving

That's an unfortunate misperception being spread by those who seek to profit off the impulse of young people to experiment, namely drug traffickers, who increase the demand for these drugs using savvy marketing techniques. They package the drugs in pill form, so there's no injection involved. They make them look like medicine or candy, so that they can easily be concealed. Traffickers even reach kids using their own language and their own media, including, colorful and creative websites set up to advertise raves and drugs. And, pushers are equally as creative with how they package the drugs themselves: they come with colorful die stamps and tablets with appealing, name-brand logos.

The dangerous trappings of the trade in these drugs—Ecstasy pills stamped with designer logos, drug-fueled rave parties, and Internet drug trafficking sites—confront our young people every day. America's young people and their parents need to be armed with the facts about the very real dangers these drugs pose—to those who are victimized and unwittingly consume them, as well as people who choose to abuse them.

Dangers Revealed

Scientific studies have shown that use of synthetic party drugs cause serious side effects, including long-term neurological damage and addiction, and overdoses are common. Ecstasy can increase users' body temperatures exceeding 106 degrees and cause severe dehydration, exhaustion, nausea, hallucinations, tremors, heart attack, and even death. Equally important is knowing that overwhelming numbers of users experience anxiety, depression, and memory loss—conditions that are especially harmful during the formative teen years.

*Ecstasy tablets
imprinted
with colorful
designs.*



Perhaps the most frightening aspect of these drugs is the more sinister purpose for which they're sometimes used. GHB, GBL, and Rohypnol are classified as predatory drugs because they can be used to facilitate sexual assaults. These drugs—odorless and tasteless—can be slipped into a drink and render a victim unconscious. Predatory drugs impair memory, making the successful prosecution of sexual predators much more difficult. There are estimates that as many as 20% of all rapes are facilitated with drugs.

The DEA is working with our law enforcement partners across the country and the world to take apart drug trafficking organizations that supply these dangerous drugs to our communities. And we're achieving success. We're seizing millions of Ecstasy pills and vials of predatory drugs destined for our communities, dismantling huge international drug trafficking organizations, and arresting those who traffic in these drugs on the Internet. Congress has aided in this battle by passing tougher legislation and scheduling these products as dangerous, addictive drugs.

Join the Fight

But our fight against drugs is more than just a battle against traffickers, it's a battle against misinformation. We need to enlist the help of the general public—people like you—to fight this battle with us. As a young person, you need to educate yourself about what these drugs are really about. As a parent, you need to be aware that "alcohol-free" dance parties may in fact be havens of drug dealing. Schools, businesses, faith-based organizations, and civic groups, we ask you to join in this effort and help us as we seek to dispel the myths about party and predatory drugs and ensure that new generations do not fall prey to their dangers.

Ecstasy

Is it really a problem?

Yes. Ecstasy is the Y Generation's cocaine and is fast becoming the number one drug problem facing America's youth today. Ecstasy's popularity has skyrocketed in just the past couple of years. The most recent National Household Survey on Drug Abuse shows that 8.1 million Americans aged 12 and older used Ecstasy in 2001—up from 6.5 million in 2000. That's a 25% increase in just one year.

Another indication of its growing popularity is the number of Ecstasy pills seized by law enforcement. In 1999, DEA seized 1.1 million dosage units. Two years later, that number leaped to 5.6 million.

Show me the love

Ecstasy first gained popularity at all-night dance parties, called "raves." (See sidebar.) Known as the "hug drug" or "feel good" drug, it reduces inhibitions and produces heightened sensuality, the elimination of anxiety, and extreme relaxation. Ecstasy users experience both hallucinogenic and stimulant effects that last several hours.

One young user, interviewed on the Public Broadcasting System's "Newshour," said that Ecstasy "really intensifies your emotions and it makes everything seem like a much bigger deal. . . And then there's the whole skin thing where you just, like, everything that you touch feels really good. And it's just interesting to feel different things and vibrations and soft stuff. It really does mess with your emotions and make you more unstable. And the day after I would usually cry."

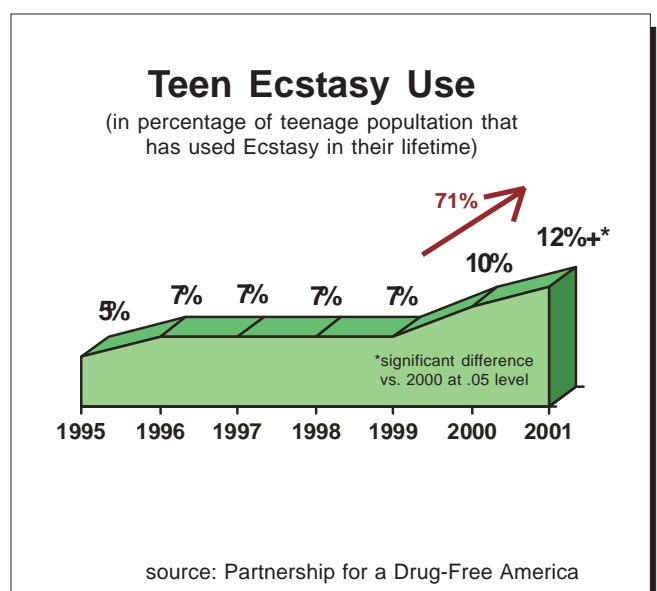
Slang terms for Ecstasy are similar across the country. It continues to be generally referred to as "X," although "E" and "roll" are also used. "Rolling" refers to being high on Ecstasy. This drug is often referred to by its design or the shape of the pill: for example, it is called "shamrock" in St. Louis because pills may be clover-shaped, and "Buddha" in Memphis because the pills may be shaped with a Buddha design.



Ecstasy, dubbed the "love" drug, is sold in a variety of tablet shapes with assorted imprints.

Show me the money

Ecstasy is synthetically manufactured in clandestine laboratories, predominately in the Netherlands and Belgium, which produce roughly 70 percent of the Ecstasy consumed worldwide. Making Ecstasy is very profitable. The cost of producing one Ecstasy tablet is as low as 50 cents, but the street price in the United States can run as high as \$30 a pill. With that huge profit margin in mind, drug traffickers are doing everything they can to drive demand for this drug.



Paraphernalia

Ecstasy users have discovered certain products that can be used to combat the drug's common side effects such as jaw muscle tension or teeth grinding. They have also discovered ways to increase the sensation from Ecstasy use. The paraphernalia listed below is commonly found at Rave parties. Parents need to be aware that these innocent-looking items could be an indication of Ecstasy use.

- *Pacifiers*
- *Lollipops*
- *Florescent Light Sticks*
- *Menthol Nasal Inhalers*
- *Vicks Vapor Rub*
- *Eye Drops*
- *Surgical Masks*
- *Skittles*
- *M&Ms*
- *Candy Necklaces or Bracelets*

Why

They help relieve jaw muscle tension and teeth grinding.

They increase stimulation and enhance the visual effects of Ecstasy.

These candies are used to conceal the Ecstasy pills.



Colored necklace and pacifier are popular "rave" accessories.



Other Ecstasy paraphrenalia include Ice Breakers® and Glow Sticks® (above), along with face masks and VapoRub® (below).



Savvy Marketers

So why has Ecstasy become so popular? In part, it may be the youthful impulse to experiment and find acceptance, but much of the blame can be placed with rave promoters and drug distributors who prey upon that impulse. Ecstasy traffickers are as marketing savvy as some *Fortune 500* companies. Some of the techniques Ecstasy traffickers use include:

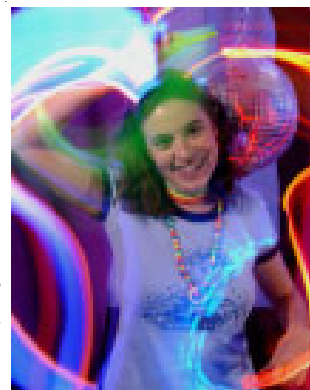
- Rave promoters reach kids using their own language and their own medium—the Internet for example. More than with any other drug, party and predatory drug traffickers use the Internet to carry on their trade. They use it for drug transactions, a means to communicate among themselves, and mostly to advertise and promote their products.
- Colorful and creative web-sites are set up to advertise raves as well as drugs. Raves are organized, promoted, and financed by local and national enterprises that advertise through word of mouth, fliers, posters, telephone, radio, and the Internet. In fact, many raves are advertised as “drug and alcohol-free” and employ security guards in order to give partygoers and parents a false sense of security. The truth is many raves are drug havens with security officers turning a blind eye to blatant drug dealing and use.
- The dealers are equally creative with how they package Ecstasy. The drug comes in the form of small, aspirin-size colorful pills. Marketers create pills often in florescent colors and stamped with an appealing image like butterflies, smiley faces, or peace symbols or designer logos like McDonald's or Calvin Klein. This is meant to build brand loyalty, instill confidence, and most of all perpetuate the myth that its use is legitimate and safe.
- Traffickers shamelessly promote Ecstasy as the “hug drug,” which is very appealing to teens’ deepest emotional needs for love and acceptance.

- Traffickers make the pills readily available at places teens frequent and where they feel comfortable. Kids don’t have to go to back alleys or dark corners to obtain the drugs. They can be easily purchased at nightclubs, dances, bars, and raves. Some traffickers will also deliver the drugs right to your door. With one call on the cell phone, dealers will deliver a colorful array of brands for the party that night.

These drugs are also being purchased at clubs and brought back to college dorms and high school parties, in city, suburban and rural areas. For example, according to the Arlington Heights (IL) *Daily Herald*, one young dealer would buy large quantities of Ecstasy at raves and sell them through 10 or 15 “distributors” to suburban teenagers, who would often pop the pills at home. “It was easier than buying weed,” the dealer said. “It was probably the easiest drug out there to get.”



Ecstasy tablets with the “Superman” logo.



Appealing colors and logos attract repeat customers

Three Dangerous Misconceptions of a “Harmless” Drug

Many Ecstasy users think that the drug is harmless fun because:

1. Ecstasy is usually taken in the form of colorful little pills, unlike drugs that are snorted or injected with a needle. Intravenous drug use is associated with all sorts of diseases, AIDS and hepatitis being the most notorious. What’s more, producers and traffickers of Ecstasy seek to differentiate their product from others by imprinting the tablets with “brand” logos or symbols. The pills take on a trendy reputation, with kids comparing drug logos the way others used to compare baseball cards.

2. Misinformation abounds—much of it on the Internet on Ecstasy promotion sites and chat rooms. America’s youth relies on the Internet for that information, but that doesn’t always yield the best results with Ecstasy. For example, if a teenager logs onto www.ecstasy.org, they will find an advice column on taking Ecstasy. One user, who called herself “a first time terrified user” logged on recently and described her first experience using the drug. She said: “I was trembling violently, had a sickening fog of paranoia, thought my heart was going to explode...” She asked for advice. The so-called experts wrote back that it was nothing to worry about. Their advice was to simply cut the dosage amount in half the next time.

3. The growth of so-called “harm reduction” organizations has contributed to its harmless reputation. Many ravers use party drugs and advocate their use, wrongly believing that they can be used responsibly and their effects managed properly. This myth is perpetuated, in part, by private drug education and drug testing organizations that have appeared at raves over the past 10 years, testing samples of illegal drugs and informing ravers of the presence or absence of Ecstasy in their tablets. The idea is that if you get “good” Ecstasy, uncorrupted by other chemicals, the drug is safe.



Organizations such as “DanceSafe” promote “harm reduction” which may mislead young people into believing that Ecstasy can be taken safely.

One non-profit organization even sells kits to test the purity of Ecstasy. But the kits are not reliable, and they often give users a false sense of security—it passed the “test,” so it must be safe, right? Wrong. Members of these organizations believe that they help reduce the number of overdoses by educating users on the physical effects of specific drugs. But color testing of drug samples does not assess the amount of the drug in a tablet, nor any contaminant such as strychnine, LSD, or PCP. Tablets often deemed “safe” by these organizations can, in fact, be deadly. Furthermore, many law enforcement agencies believe that the practices of harm reduction organizations actually encourage drug use, and some have seen a correlation between party drug overdoses and increases in the activities of those organizations

Ultimately, just because a drug may be more “pure,” it doesn’t mean that it is safe. In reality, it is the Ecstasy itself—even without additives or contaminants—that is dangerous – Ecstasy can cause fatal increases in body temperature and, more insidiously, long-term damage to the brain.

Lynn Smith: One Woman's Experience with Ecstasy

(Excerpts from testimony before Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources Subcommittee of the House Government Reform Committee, September 19, 2002)

"I grew up in a really, really tiny town called Danville, which is in Pennsylvania. Lots of cows, lots of pastures, lots of farms. And I was a straight A student, well liked, popular, all of those things — you know, a boyfriend. All of those things you want when you're young, I had. And I'd always dreamed of moving to New York City to pursue a career in theater when I was old enough, when I graduated.

*(In New York City, at the age of 19)
"I was exposed to new people from acting school I just thought were so exotic, so intelligent, so amazing. And every party we went to there would just seem to be an endless supply of drugs....We were sitting, you know, in apartments of different friends and there would be cocaine, there would be Ecstasy, there would be heroin.*

"....And one particular evening, when I fell in love with Ecstasy, my love affair began that evening when my friend pulled out a card and said, 'We're going to order some pills. Do you want anything?' I said, 'Well.'" She's like, 'Oh, don't even answer. We'll just order some. If you want, you can have.' So like calling Domino's Pizza, 30 minutes or less, there was a messenger at our door with a bag of pills with little smiley faces on. Very interesting emblems: Nike symbols, Mitsubishi's. It was just, like, 'Okay, pick out your favorite color. Pick out what represents your personality.'

"....I had seen them all do Ecstasy before and it just seemed so — I mean, everything I learned growing up was it was going to be a scary, dark alley. You know, it was going to be a dark, scary man selling me drugs....And it wasn't. It was in a beautiful Greenwich Village apartment, nice smooth lighting. The drug dealers were my friends. And the awful feeling that I thought came from a drug looked very amazing to me, everyone giving massages and hugging and talking. And I did it. And after that pill nothing was ever the same again. I just thought, 'Oh my gosh, this is what true happiness is.'

"I couldn't catch my breath. I felt like I was having a heart attack...hallucinating...I never thought this drug could do this to me."

"....And my friends changed. I was bartending late hours and I began to use Ecstasy more and more. I was going out to clubs. It was basically during a five-month period that I was getting involved with people who sold Ecstasy....I was just popping pills like they were candy and the reverse effects soon set in. I was having panic attacks, I was feeling like I wanted to rip my skin off, I wanted to die. I couldn't sleep at night, I couldn't eat....At the end of this spiral, I was sitting at home in my apartment in Brooklyn with my boyfriend and my roommate. We just finished a movie, it was late. I sat up on the couch. And within seconds I just felt changed. I felt like I snapped — something inside me snapped. I couldn't catch my breath. I felt like I was having a heart attack, I was hallucinating.

"My boyfriend called my mom. I got on the phone and I said, 'You've got to come get me. I'm dead. I'm dying. I'm going crazy. I'm in hell.'...By the time she got there I was so completely out of reality that when she pulled up to the curb, I didn't know who she was and I refused to get in the car with her...so my boyfriend had to force me in the car.

"....I was in a psychiatric ward for 14 days. The first few days I refused to take medications because I was so paranoid and I was afraid that I was swallowing more Ecstasy....I never thought this drug could do this to me. Everything I read about, everything I saw, everything I heard was — you know, The New York Times Magazine, I don't know if you've all read that, a few years back with a tall, beautiful model with the word Ecstasy wrapped around her. And I read the article thinking — and this is after I got out of the hospital, thinking why am I not still doing this? It was just saying how great it was and what the amazing effects were. And I thought I'm alone in this, I'm going crazy, I'm the only crazy person.

"....No one had called me while I was in the hospital, no one contacted me. None of those friends, that were just like hugging and kissing and giving you massages, not a trace of them anywhere to be found. To this day, I haven't talked to one of them. I never made an effort to kind of go back and talk. It was just — they're still in the same life. They're still going to the clubs, they're still doing the same thing."

Health Consequences: What the Science Says

Damage to the Body

There is widespread ignorance among parents and their teens of Ecstasy's effects. The common misconception is that Ecstasy is safe and non-addictive, but the facts show otherwise. The side effects can be debilitating, and overdoses are common. Ecstasy abuse can produce severe dehydration, exhaustion, nausea, hallucinations, increase in body temperature, tremors, and heart attacks. Ecstasy has produced liver and kidney damage that doesn't show up until days or weeks after the drug is consumed, and studies show that chronic Ecstasy use causes brain damage and can result in after-effects, such as anxiety and depression. The Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN) estimates that nationwide hospital emergency room mentions for Ecstasy rose sharply from 637 in 1997 to 5,542 in 2001. The State of Florida has reported 103 deaths directly linked to Ecstasy consumption in 2001, alone. Taking the drug in a hot setting, like a rave, can cause users to go into the type of convulsions that have been associated with dangerously high fevers. Ecstasy-related deaths have been recorded where users' core body temperatures reached up to 106 to 109 degrees.

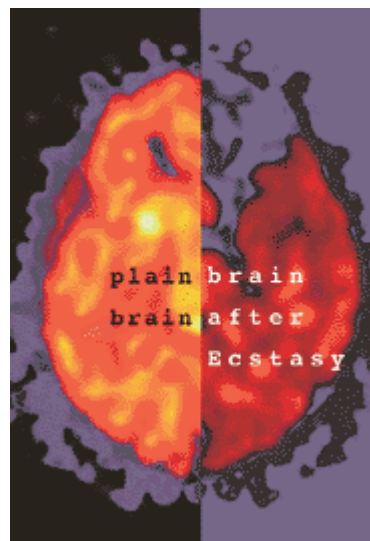
Damage to the Brain

Perhaps less visible initially, but of equal concern, is the potential long-term harm the drug can cause to the brain. Ecstasy actually injures the brain in ways that last long after users stop taking it. A study conducted by researchers at Johns Hopkins Medical Center revealed that habitual Ecstasy abusers suffer long-term neurological damage. The study indicates that recreational Ecstasy users may be in danger of developing permanent brain damage that might manifest itself in the form of depression, anxiety, memory loss, or neuro-psychiatric disorder. Other evidence suggests that Ecstasy affects its users in ways similar to Alzheimer's.



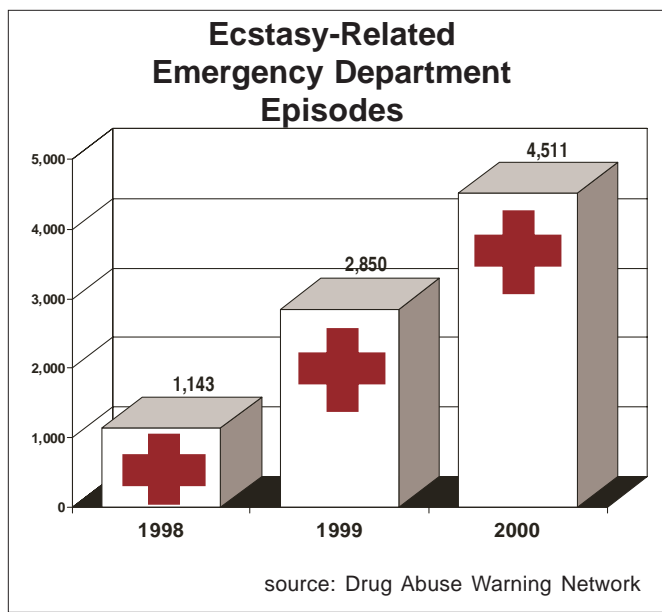
In a study just published in the Journal of Science and conducted by scientists at Johns Hopkins University, primates were injected with two or three doses of Ecstasy over a few hours.

The study discovered evidence that severe brain damage occurs to the nerve cells, which produce the neurotransmitter dopamine in the area of the brain controlling movement. The study concluded that neurological damage could stay hidden for years and increase the risk of Parkinson's disease and associated movement-related disorders.



source: National Institute of Health

In addition, numerous major scientific studies published in peer-reviewed journals have shown significant impairments in memory and learning in individuals who have taken Ecstasy. Studies conducted in the United Kingdom indicate that the effect Ecstasy use has on the memory cannot be simply attributed to withdrawal or residual effects—Ecstasy use may result in persistent memory damage.



Black Tuesday

Ecstasy use may also be accompanied by a “depressive hangover” that can last days after use. This is sometimes referred to as “Black Tuesday” or “Suicide Tuesday,” describing the feelings of helpless depression after coming down from weekend Ecstasy highs. The potential for depression caused by Ecstasy use is widely reported.

According to a study at Johns Hopkins Medical Center, the negative psychological and physical effects of Ecstasy use increase with the use of the drug. However, it is impossible to determine how much of the drug or which person will be plagued by such effects—some first time users may experience some of the most devastating effects, including death (see stories on page 22). Of course, those most at risk are kids. In 2001, 77 percent of the 5,542 Ecstasy emergency room mentions were attributed to patients age 25 and under. Ecstasy use can be addictive, as well. A recent study supported by the National Institute on Drug Abuse studied 173 adolescents and young adults. Of the 52 who had reported using Ecstasy, almost 60 percent met the diagnostic criteria for abuse and dependence. Forty-three percent met the criteria for Ecstasy dependence alone.

Health Consequences: What the Users Say:

“...Each time I dropped, the next day’s ‘come down’ was more depressing. It’s like you need more of it just to keep you happy...It was affecting my brain and its normal thought patterns. I was losing myself quick and could hardly remember the little things I used to do that made me happy and made me feel comfortable to be me. I was nothing but a drug addict. I was addicted to Ecstasy.” —Josh, 17, California

“I have done Ecstasy twice and I can honestly say that it has changed my life forever. A week after the first time, I was admitted to the hospital for severe anxiety and panic attacks. I thought I was going to die. That was followed by depression and cloudy thinking, I was a mess. I felt really strange for about four months, and then the feelings started to subside...two weeks later, I was admitted to an outpatient program in a mental health facility. To this day, I still suffer from anxiety and depression.” —Quenby, 23, Colorado

“I never thought it would be me. I never thought that I would be addicted to ‘E’. I never thought I would end up how I am today...on the verge of manic depression, a disease which changes the way you live forever. I took E so many times I can’t even count. I emptied out my bank account and started getting it for free. I did everything for it...This went on for a year until I realized that something was wrong with me. I lost so much weight and got major kidney problems. I was in the hospital for days.” —Megan, 17, Pennsylvania

“The worst mistake I ever made was taking Ecstasy. Yeah, it feels good, but now I have to deal with a mental disorder, directly related to taking Ecstasy. I even attempted suicide during an Ecstasy ‘comedown.’ Be educated, don’t make the same mistakes as I did.” —Rosalin, 20, Illinois

source:

www.pbs.org/inthemix/shows/show_ecstasy2.html

The Source

How are these drugs getting into the country? After all, Ecstasy is not generally made in America. Ecstasy is synthetically manufactured in laboratories predominately in the Netherlands and Belgium, which produce the majority of the ecstasy consumed worldwide. A typical clandestine laboratory is capable of producing 20 - 30 kilograms of Ecstasy per day, with one kilogram of ecstasy producing approximately 7,000 tablets. Dutch Police reported the seizure of one laboratory capable of producing approximately 100 kilograms of ecstasy per day.

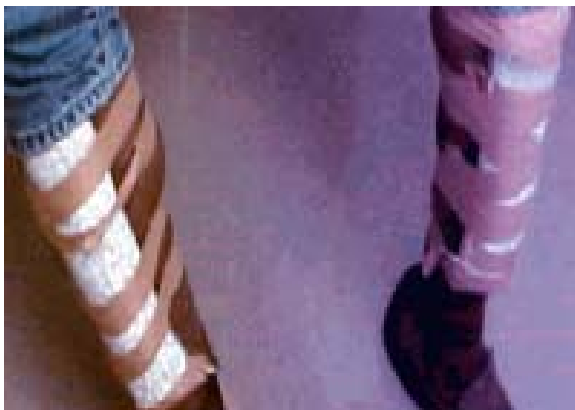
Think about these numbers and the enormous profit margins they represent. Although estimates vary, the cost of producing one Ecstasy tablet is between \$.50 - \$1.00. The wholesale price for Ecstasy tablets ranges from \$1.00-\$2.00, contingent on the volume purchased. Once the Ecstasy reaches the United States, a domestic cell distributor will charge from \$6 to \$12 per tablet. The Ecstasy retailer, in turn, will distribute the ecstasy for \$20 to \$30 per tablet. At \$20 per tablet, one kilogram of Ecstasy would generate \$140,000. At \$30 per tablet-\$210,000.



High-volume Ecstasy smuggling into the United States is big business.

The transportation and distribution of Ecstasy trafficked in the United States are controlled by various factions of Israeli and Russian Organized Crime groups. These groups recruit and utilize American, Israeli and western European nationals as couriers. Couriers can smuggle 2 to 5 kilograms on their persons and 10 kilograms of Ecstasy in specially designed luggage. In addition to the use of couriers, these organizations commonly exploit commercial mail services to arrange delivery of their merchandise.

Although Israeli and Russian Ecstasy trafficking organizations dominate the Ecstasy market in the United States, other drug trafficking organizations based in Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Asia, and Mexico have entered the Ecstasy trade. Dominican and/or Colombian nationals smuggling cocaine to Europe have exchanged their cocaine for Ecstasy pills, a significant quantity of which will be destined for U.S. cities. Indonesia authorities recently seized a large-scale Ecstasy laboratory in Jakarta, Indonesia, which resulted in the seizure of over 300 pounds of Ecstasy. As Ecstasy proves more profitable and as law enforcement pressures force the traffickers to re-group, the U.S. Ecstasy trade will become increasingly diverse.



Bags of Ecstasy were taped to the legs of this drug smuggler.

These Ecstasy tablets were stamped with the letters of the Drug Enforcement Administration.



A Guide for Parents

Parents can have an enormous impact on their children when it comes to a teen's decision about drug use. When parents take the time to sit down with their children and discuss the risks of drug use and the value of a drug-free life, their kids are far less likely to use drugs — in fact, 50 percent less likely according to one survey.

It's not only important to discuss the risks of drugs, it's also important to know where your children are, who their friends are, even who their friends' parents are. When parents first learn that a child is having problems with drug use, a common reaction is that they had no idea their kids were hanging out with a circle of drug-using friends, or that their friends' parents took such a lenient view of drug use.

Families: the Anti-Drug

Research—and really just plain old-fashioned common sense—tells us how important regular family activities like eating dinner together, attending religious services, or participating in community organizations, are simple, effective ways to reduce youth drug use and raise healthier children. We also know that kids who find acceptance and channel energies into passions—sports, music, civic organizations—see no value in drug use and learn how damaging drugs are to their interests, their bodies, and their future.

Parents need to be aware of drug trends, talk with their teens about drug use, and take an active interest in their comings and goings. Listed at right are a number of things you can use to determine whether you might have an Ecstasy user in the family, and what you can do to help turn things around.



Know the Physical Signs of Ecstasy Use

- Increased heart rate
- Convulsions
- Extreme rise in body temperature
- Uncontrollable movements
- Insomnia
- Impaired speech
- Dehydration
- High blood pressure
- Grinding teeth

Look for Indicators of Ecstasy Use

- Ecstasy paraphernalia
- Pacifiers
- Candy necklaces
- Surgical-type masks
- Glow sticks and/or glowing jewelry
- Lollipops
- Mentholated rub

Common signs of Ecstasy use

- Confusion
- Panic attacks
- Headaches and/or dizziness
- Loss of memory
- Hallucinations
- Sore jaw as a result of the involuntary jaw clenching that is often a side effect of Ecstasy use
- Loss of inhibitions
- Unusual displays of affection
- Depression
- Paranoia

Where Does a Parent Go for Help?

- If you suspect your child is using Ecstasy, monitor behavior carefully.
- Enforce strict curfews.
- Approach your child when he or she is not under the influence of drugs, and if necessary, call on other family members and friends to support you in the discussion.
- Once the problem is confirmed, seek the help of professionals.
- If the person is under the influence of drugs and immediate intervention is necessary, consider medical assistance.
- Professionals who can provide information and intervention assistance:
 - Doctors
 - Hospital substance abuse programs
 - School counselors
 - County mental health society
 - Members of the clergy
- Organizations such as Narcotics Anonymous

Predatory & Other Party Drugs

Ecstasy is by far the most popular of the party drugs. But there are other drugs on the youth scene that are used, often in concert with Ecstasy. These drugs have chemical sounding names like GHB, GBL, 1,4 BD, and Ketamine that are synthetically produced in laboratories but are every bit as dangerous and addictive as more well known centuries-old drugs like heroin and cocaine. What's more, several of them are used for a more sinister purpose. Called predatory drugs, they can be slipped into a victim's drink. They're odorless and tasteless, so the user never knows what hits them. They're rendered unconscious, unable to fight back, and unable to remember, so predators use these drugs to commit rape, date-rape, sexual assault, domestic violence, and other crimes of violence.

The Nature of Predatory Drugs

In a recent DEA drug-facilitated sexual assault training conference, Gail Abarbanel, founder and director of the nationally recognized Rape Treatment Center, estimated that 15%-20% of all rapes were facilitated with drugs, which is why GHB and other such drugs are referred to as predatory drugs. In an article published in the National Institute of Justice Journal, in April 2000, Ms. Abarbanel said:

"In late 1995, the Rape Treatment Center at Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center began to see a new pattern in sexual assault cases. Victims were coming in who believed they had been drugged surreptitiously to incapacitate them for the purpose of sexually assaulting them."

"Many of these cases followed a similar pattern. Victims were in what seemed like a comfortable social environment, such as a restaurant, party, or club. Unbeknownst to them, someone slipped a drug into their drink. As they consumed the drink, they began to feel disoriented or sick. The next thing they remembered was waking up hours later, sometimes in a different location."

"...It was apparent to the staff at the Rape Treatment Center that some rapists were using a powerful new weapon to overpower, disable, and control their victims. When victims began to report these crimes to the authorities, their cases were often dismissed. One victim was told, 'he has his memory, you don't have yours. There's no evidence. The case is closed.'"

"....Rape drugs make it relatively easy for rapists to gain control of their victims. Perpetrators do not have to overcome any form of resistance. They do not have to use physical force. They do not have to threaten to harm the victim to get compliance. Nor do they have to be concerned about a victim's screams attracting attention. The drugs they administer immobilize and silence the victim."

For every 100 Rapes in the United States:

- 32 are reported to the police
- 16 result in an arrest
- 13 defendants will face prosecution
- 7 will be convicted
- 5 will go to prison

Bottom Line: Only 1 out of every 20 rapists will go to jail. Predatory drugs, which can incapacitate victims and impair memory, combined with the lower reporting rate for sexual assault, make the successful prosecution of sexual predators that much more difficult.

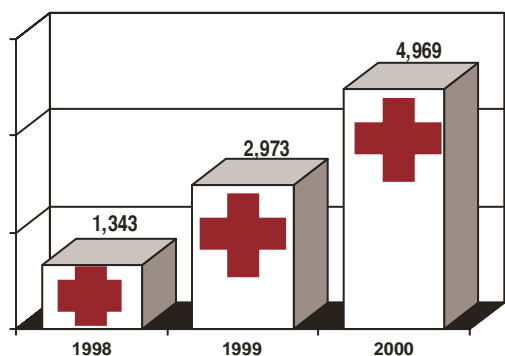
Compiled by RAINN from US Justice Department studies

GHB (gamma hydroxybutyrate) Hidden in H2O

GHB is a chemical that depresses the central nervous system. On the street, it is usually sold as an odorless, colorless liquid in water bottles. Its appearance is deceptively innocuous, but GHB is dangerously toxic. It's made from a substance called GBL, which is a solvent found in acetone-free nail polish removers, floor cleaning products, and lye (sodium hydroxide). GHB generates feelings of euphoria and intoxication. Some users report that it is an aphrodisiac.

It is also used as a chemical method of counteracting the stimulant effect of Ecstasy. Street names for GHB are Georgia Home Boy, Liquid Ecstasy, Grievous Bodily Harm, Fantasy, Easy Lay, Everclear, Gamma 10, and Goob. GHB is produced in clear liquid, white powder, tablet, and capsule forms. Because of its salty taste, it is often combined in carbonated sodas, alcohol, or health food drinks and is popular among adolescents and young adults attending raves and nightclubs. At lower doses, GHB causes drowsiness, nausea, and visual disturbances. At higher dosages, unconsciousness, seizures, severe respiratory depression, and coma can occur. Repeated GHB use causes severe, debilitating depression and anxiety. The explosion of GHB use, and the health consequences of its use, can be seen in the drug's role in admissions to hospital emergency rooms. In 1994, 56 people were reported admitted to hospital emergency room nationwide because of GHB. By 2000, the number had skyrocketed to 4,969.

Emergency Department Episodes --GHB--



source: Drug Abuse Warning Network

The Tragic Story of Samantha Reid

In 2000, one young girl who was taken to an emergency room after an overdose of GHB was brain-dead by the time she arrived. Fifteen-year old Samantha Reid, a high school freshman in suburban Detroit, went out one night with two girlfriends and drove to a party hosted by some older boys. The boys had slipped some GHB into a few bottles of Mountain Dew. Samantha drank hers and fell asleep on the couch. She never woke up. According to the detective who investigated the case, "None of the girls ever knew the substance was put in their drinks. Samantha never knew what happened to her." Three of the boys were later found guilty of manslaughter and were sentenced to 15 years in prison. Samantha's mother, Judi Clark, has worked tirelessly to educate the public about the dangers of GHB and other Predatory Drugs. She helped to develop federal legislation on GHB to prevent more tragedies like that which struck her daughter, culminating in the *Hillory J. Farias and Samantha Reid Date-Rape Drug Prohibition Act of 2000*.

Sexual Assault

GHB is easily slipped into someone's drink and may be completely undetectable. The victim may remember taking a drink, but is unable to recall what happened



GHB is produced in a clear liquid, white powder, tablet, and capsule forms.

for a period of time after consuming the drink. The drug may render the victim unconscious, and the victim may never see or know the perpetrator. GHB has often been used in the commission of sexual assaults, not only because it makes the victim incapable of resisting, but because it may also cause memory problems that can complicate case prosecution. The drug leaves the system very quickly, sometimes 8 to 10 hours after ingestion, making it difficult for physicians and medical examiners to gather evidence.

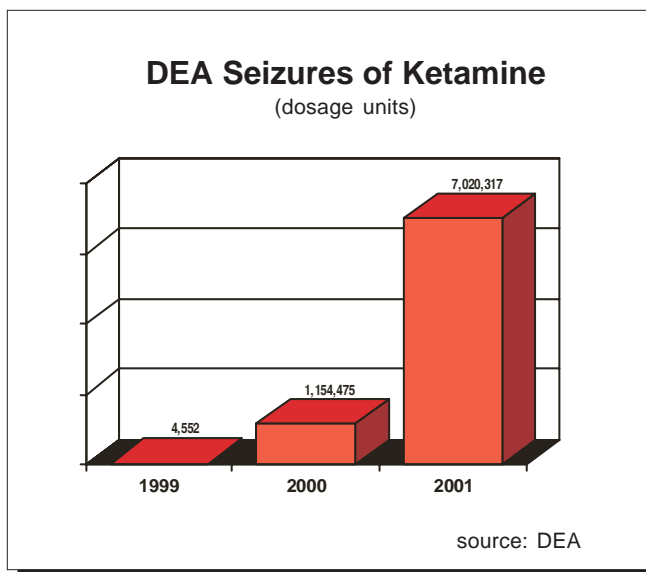
Ketamine

Ketamine, another popular drug on the rave scene, is used as an anesthetic by both veterinarians and physicians. Its street names are Super Acid, Special "K," Super K, Cat Valium, Vitamin K, Purple, Super C, Jet, Green, and K. Ketamine comes in a clear liquid and white or off-white powder form. The liquid form can be injected, consumed in drinks, or added to smokable materials. The powder form can be used for injection when dissolved.

Its growing popularity is evidenced in its seizure statistics. In 1999, the DEA seized 44 milliliters of Ketamine; compared to 4150 milliliters in the first nine months of 2002. Ketamine causes disorientation and memory loss and is also used in the commission of sexual assaults. It produces physical effects similar to PCP, with the visual effects of LSD. Users report that it is better than PCP or LSD because the trip lasts an hour or less. Low doses of the drug produce an experience called "K-Land," a mellow colorful "wonder world." Higher doses produce an effect referred to as "K-Hole," an "out-of-body," or "near-death" experience.



Liquid ketamine in its original pharmaceutical packaging.



More About Ketamine

What does Ketamine look like?

Ketamine comes in a clear liquid and a white or off-white powder form.

How is Ketamine used?

Ketamine is a tranquilizer most commonly used on animals. The liquid form can be injected, consumed in drinks, or added to smokable materials. The powder form can be used for injection when dissolved. In certain areas, Ketamine is being injected intramuscularly.

Who uses Ketamine?

Ketamine, along with the other "club drugs," has become popular among teens and young adults at dance clubs and "raves."

How does Ketamine get into the United States?

Marketed as a dissociative general anesthetic for human and veterinary use, the only known source of Ketamine is via diversion of pharmaceutical products. Recent press reports indicate that a significant number of veterinary clinics are being robbed specifically for their Ketamine stock. DEA reporting indicates that a major source of Ketamine in the United States is product diverted from pharmacies in Mexico.

How much does Ketamine cost?

Prices average \$20 to \$25 per dosage unit.

What are some consequences of Ketamine use?

Higher doses produce an effect referred to as "K-Hole," an "out of body," or "near-death" experience. Use of the drug can cause delirium, amnesia, depression, and long-term memory and cognitive difficulties. Due to its dissociative effect, it is reportedly used as a date-rape drug.

Rohypnol

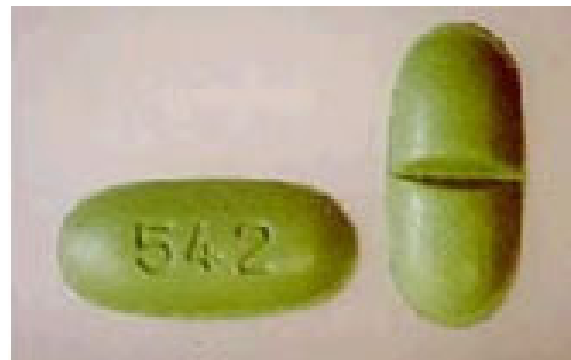
Rohypnol is the brand name for flunitrazepam, which acts to depress the central nervous system. It is in the same drug family as Valium, Halcion, and Xanax, but is seven-to-ten times as strong as Valium. Rohypnol is marketed in Latin America and Europe as a short-term treatment for insomnia and as a pre-anesthetic medication, but it is illegal in the United States.

Rohypnol is abused by teenagers and young adults, sometimes at raves and nightclubs. Like GHB and Ketamine, Rohypnol is considered a predatory drug because it, too, causes a form of amnesia. Users may not remember events that occurred while under the influence of the drug.

Its street names are Roofies, Rophies, Roche, Roach, Forget-Me Pill, Ropes, Circles, R-2, and Mexican Valium. Rohypnol used to come in a white tablet, scored on one side with “Roche” stamped on the other side. The new Rohypnol tablet, oblong and olive green, is imprinted with the number 542, and includes a dye that may make the drug visible if slipped into a drink. Rohypnol is generally crushed and easily dissolved in drinks. It can also be ground up for snorting.



Original Rohypnol tablets and packaging.



New Rohypnol tablets includes a dye that may make the drug visible if slipped into a drink.

Sexual Assault in the United States:

- More than 260,000 Americans are sexually assaulted each year.
- 80% of the victims are under age 30.
- More than 62% of sexual assault victims know their attacker.
- Only about 30% of sexual assaults are reported to the police.
- 15% to 20% of rapes are drug induced.

Compiled by RAINN from US Justice Department studies 1999-2000.

GBL (Gamma Butyrolactone) and 1,4 BD (1, 4-Butanediol)

Industrial chemicals as feel-good drugs?

GBL and 1,4 BD are commonly used in the production of industrial chemicals, such as cleaners, adhesives, and paint thinner. But when ingested, they are used as a barbiturate-like depressant. 1,4 BD and GBL generate feelings of euphoria and intoxication similar to the effects of GHB. They're also marketed as health and dietary supplements to enhance bodybuilding, and as a treatment for insomnia or depression. Prior to February 18, 2000, GBL and 1,4 BD were readily available as dietary supplements with market names such as Longevity, Revivarant, GH Revitalizer, Gamma G, Blue Nitro, Insom-X, Remforce, Firewater, Invigorate, SomatoPro, Serenity, ThunderNectar, Weight Belt Cleaner, and NRG3. In 2000, the FDA issued a warning against dietary supplements containing GBL and BD and asked for a voluntary recall of all such products. The scientific community has repeatedly warned against using these GBL and BD for these purposes due to the drugs' toxic effects.

Chemical Cousins

GBL is a primary chemical in the manufacture of GHB, and some users buy GBL solely for the purpose of converting it into GHB. The conversion process, which is quite simple, is available, along with the necessary chemicals, over the Internet, with kits selling from \$48 to \$200.

Other users will ingest small quantities of GBL and 1,4 BD straight, because once ingested, these substances convert into GHB in the body, often causing a severe physical reaction. 1,4 BD and GBL can increase the effects of alcohol and can cause respiratory distress, seizures, coma, and even death.



GBL: Blue Nitro® and Renewtrient® in liquid and pill forms have been removed from the market.

Operation Webslinger

Like GHB, GBL and BD have been used in drug-facilitated sexual assault and other crimes of violence. All three of these drugs are invisible when dissolved in water and are odorless, making it difficult for victims to be aware that they have been drugged. Awareness of the presence of these drugs is further complicated because they metabolize quickly in the body, leaving little physical evidence of their presence.

Targeting Traffickers on the Internet

Traffickers have taken to selling these drugs on Internet sites disguised as industrial cleaning and solvent companies. But in reality, they're sold for human consumption. At least one death and likely numerous assaults can be attributed to drugs sold by individuals recently arrested in a DEA enforcement action called "Operation Webslinger." Operation Webslinger had an immediate and national impact on drug availability, with drug users saying in chat rooms that the operation had brought on "an end to an era" in Internet drug trafficking.



1,4 BD (1, 4-Butanediol)

Methamphetamine

Poor Man's Cocaine

Methamphetamine is a chemical that stimulates the central nervous system. It has emerged as an alternative to Ecstasy at clubs and raves. Traditionally considered the “poor-man’s” cocaine, it is typically a white, odorless, bitter-tasting powder that easily dissolves in water. Another common form of the drug is crystal

meth, or “ice,” which looks somewhat like rock candy. Crystal meth is smoked in a manner similar to crack cocaine and about 10 to 15 “hits” can be obtained by a single gram of the substance.



Meth labs (above) use toxic chemicals that endanger public safety and require expensive clean-up efforts.



An alarming new phenomenon in the United States is the tablet form of methamphetamine, which have been found primarily in northern California and the Los Angeles area. The tablets, which are frequently referred to by their Thai name, yaba (“crazy pill”), are a composite of methamphetamine and

caffeine. Already a serious threat throughout much of rural America, meth in tablet form may pose a new danger as its producers pick up on the marketing success of Ecstasy. Yaba is now being found in colorful little pills, many of which have had flavoring added—giving the pills the appearance and the taste of candy, and adding to the mistaken notion that this powerfully addictive little pill is “harmless.”

Speed Kills

Amphetamines have been available in the United States since the early 1930s. Two amphetamine-based pills, Benzedrine and Dexedrine, were used extensively in the 1950s and 60s for weight loss. They were also used as a stimulant by truck drivers and students, among others, to stay awake for long periods of time. In the 1960s, some amphetamine users, called speed-freaks,



Methamphetamine is sold as powder (left), “ice” crystalline form (below), and “yaba” pills (right).



began to inject it into their veins to achieve a more intense high. The often dire consequences of shooting up, including physical exhaustion, mental psychosis, and rapid weight loss, gave rise to the phrase, “speed kills.”

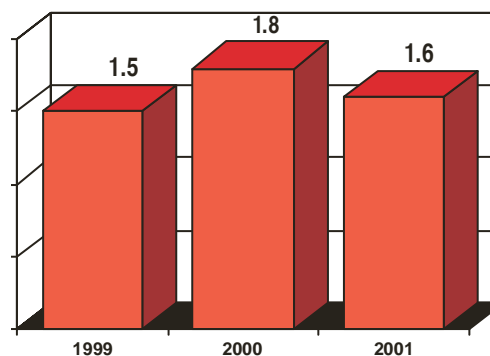
High doses or chronic use have been associated with increased nervousness, irritability, and paranoia. Withdrawal from high doses produces severe depression. Chronic abuse produces a psychosis similar to schizophrenia and is characterized by paranoia, picking at the skin, self absorption, and auditory and visual hallucinations.

Tweaking

The most dangerous stage of the methamphetamine binge cycle is called “tweaking.” Typically, during this stage, the abuser has not slept in three to 10 days and is agitated and paranoid. The tweaker has an intense craving for more meth; however, no dosage will help recreate the euphoric high. This causes frustration and leads to unpredictability and often, violence.

DEA Seizures of Meth

(grams in millions)



source: DEA



Enforcing the Nation's Drug Laws

Legislation

The methods criminals use to traffic and distribute illegal drugs are constantly evolving, as are the methods that law enforcement agencies use to combat them. But even changes

in law enforcement tactics are sometimes not sufficient to fight the newest threats, and federal, state, and local governments must pass new laws to give law enforcement agencies with the tools they need to meet them.

In 1970, Congress enacted the Controlled Substances Act (CSA), which allows the DEA, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), or any interested party to initiate proceedings to add, delete, or change the “schedule” of a drug. Drugs controlled by the CSA are listed in Schedules I-V. Drugs on Schedule I are considered the most dangerous, have the greatest potential for abuse, and are not currently accepted within the medical profession for use in treating patients. Drugs on Schedule V are the least dangerous, have the lowest potential for abuse, and are commonly accepted in medical treatment of patients. The DEA uses a very rigorous process to place drugs on these schedules.



Ecstasy has been a Schedule I drug since 1988. However, in November of 2001, Congress recognized the growing threat posed by this drug and passed the *Ecstasy Anti-Proliferation Act*. This new law required the U.S. Sentencing Commission to increase sentencing guidelines for those convicted of trafficking in Ecstasy. As a result, the Commission increased the sentence for trafficking 800 Ecstasy pills from a year-and-a-half to five years, and increased the penalty for trafficking 8,000 pills from three-and-a-half years to 10 years.

In 1996, also recognizing a growing problem whereby so-called predatory drugs were being used to facilitate sexual assaults, Congress passed the *Drug-Induced Rape Prevention & Punishment Act*. This law established federal penalties of up to 20 years imprisonment and associated fines for anyone convicted of committing a crime of violence, including rape, by administering a controlled substance without a victim’s knowledge or consent. Furthermore, in February of 2000, Congress passed the *Hillary J. Farias and Samantha Reid Date-Rape Drug Prohibition Act of 2000*, named for two young women who died after unknowingly ingesting GHB that had been slipped into their soft drinks. This law makes GHB, which had been on Schedule III before 2000, a Schedule I drug under the CSA.

Legislation is currently being considered in both the House and the Senate to subject individuals who intentionally condone the sale or use of illegal drugs on their property, whether it is temporary or permanent—owned, leased or rented—to the “Crack House Statute.” This legislation, should it pass, will help law enforcement agencies and prosecutors to convict criminals who have previously escaped punishment because the facilities they used were not permanent, or were owned by others.

Schedule I

GHB
MDMA (Ecstasy)

Schedule II

Methamphetamine

Schedule III

Ketamine

Schedule IV

Rohypnol



GHB



Ketamine



Rohypnol



Meth

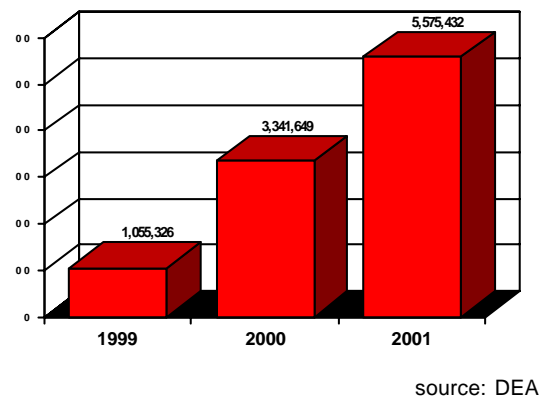
Enforcement Efforts

Reducing the Supply

The expanding use of party and predatory drugs by young adults has become one of the most difficult social issues facing our nation today. In response to the alarming spread of these drugs, DEA has begun a comprehensive effort to limit the manufacture, distribution, and abuse of these dangerous drugs. In 2001, DEA established the Dangerous Drugs Unit to combat the abuse and trafficking of some of the more dangerous illegal drugs. Special Agents in this unit coordinate domestic and foreign investigations targeting organizations and individuals who manufacture and distribute predatory drugs and Ecstasy and other party drugs. DEA is also focusing on international enforcement activities to stem the tide of Ecstasy, predatory, and party drugs coming to the United States from abroad. Since the Netherlands and Belgium produce roughly 70 percent of the Ecstasy consumed worldwide, we're working closely with the Dutch Police on a Synthetic Drug Unit pilot project and other operations to target Ecstasy and synthetic drug organizations in the Netherlands. In addition, DEA has met with other European law enforcement agencies to coordinate worldwide investigative activity related to the international trafficking of Ecstasy.

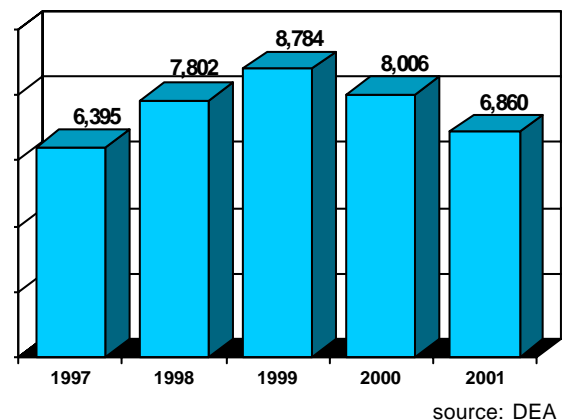


DEA Seizures of Ecstasy
(dosage units)



Operation Red Tide began as a result of the largest single seizure of Ecstasy (MDMA). Over 1,000 pounds (2.1 million tablets) were seized on July 22, 2000, in Los Angeles, CA.

**DEA Arrests
--Methamphetamine--**



Recent Successes

These international and domestic efforts are paying off. A few recent examples:

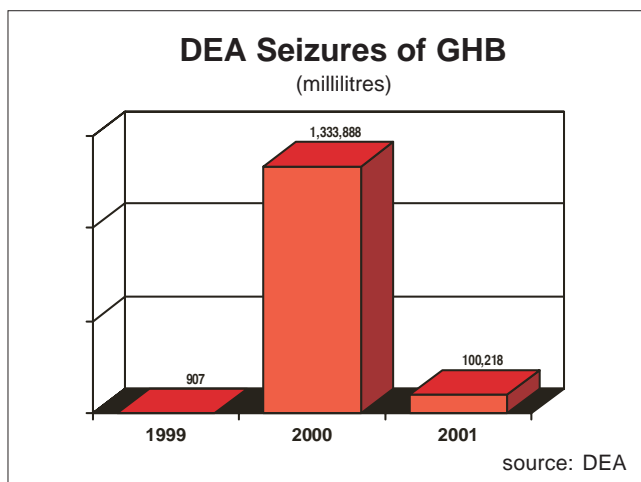


- In August 2002, the DEA dismantled one of the largest worldwide Ecstasy trafficking organizations, with a large ring operating out of Houston, Texas, that was responsible for the distribution of more than one million Ecstasy tablets in the Houston area alone.
- In September 2002, DEA dismantled four nationwide drug distribution rings in the first ever operation targeting internet traffickers of date rape drugs. The DEA and several other federal, state and local law enforcement agencies concluded Operation Webslinger, a two-year investigation that was carried out in over 100 cities, and resulted in the arrest of 136 individuals and the seizure of approximately 25,000,000 dosage units of predatory drugs and over \$1 million in assets.
- In October 2002, the DEA seized 1.4 million Ecstasy pills in New York-the third largest seizure ever in this country.
- In the summer of 2002, two large-scale Israeli Ecstasy traffickers were extradited from Israel to the United States. This marked the first extradition of any Israeli citizen to the United States for a drug crime.
- These enforcement activities have netted very tangible positive results for the communities in which they have taken place. For example, after a recent string of enforcement activities targeting illegal drug sales and use during rave parties at the State Palace Theater in New Orleans, Louisiana, party drug-related overdoses in New Orleans dropped 90 percent, and Ecstasy overdoses disappeared altogether.

Operation X-Out

To continue these kind of successes, DEA began in late 2002 Operation X-Out, a multi-faceted 12-month initiative that focuses on identifying and dismantling organizations that are producing and distributing party and predatory drugs in the United States and abroad. It focuses DEA's resources and talents on reducing the supply of these dangerous drugs. Working with our law enforcement partners across the country and the world, DEA will:

- Invest more resources in party and predatory drug investigations. Right now, these type of investigations make up 5% of our total cases-we will increase that to at least 10%. These investigations will take place across the country.
- Virtually all Ecstasy is smuggled into this country frequently by couriers or airmail services, so we will enhance airport interdiction task forces to increase coverage at certain airports.
- Create new task forces in places like Miami and New York-which are primary entryways for Ecstasy. These units will identify and investigate party and predatory drug trafficking organizations and illicit rave promoters.
- Create a task force to focus on Internet drug trafficking.
- Work closely with our international law enforcement colleagues to target the manufacturers and distributors of party and predatory drugs.



The Ecstasy and Predatory Drug Awareness Campaign

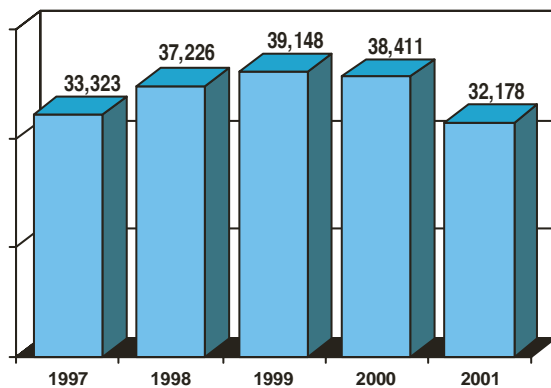
Despite encouraging enforcement successes, the DEA recognizes that enforcement alone is not enough to stop this new threat. The DEA must also help raise awareness and educate the public about the dangers of Ecstasy and predatory drugs. As a result, the DEA is developing a national awareness campaign.

The focus of the campaign is three fold:

1. Educate students, educators, parents, health and law enforcement communities (see sidebar).
2. Demonstrate DEA's broad based commitment to fighting the impact these drugs have on our society by building coalitions nationwide to fight this threat in our communities and reduce demand for the drug.
3. Fulfill the Attorney General's responsibilities as defined in the 2002 Annual Report Regarding Date-Rape Drugs; National Awareness Campaign.



**DEA Arrests
--All drugs--**



source: DEA

"The Knowledge Gap We're Up Against"

"The first way you have an impact is by providing knowledge. You educate and inform kindergartners through high school seniors about the very real dangers of drugs. It sounds simplistic, but it's often quite a knowledge gap we're dealing with, especially when it comes to new drugs, like Ecstasy."

"A few months back, the DEA wrapped up a successful Ecstasy operation in Denver. It was called Green Clover. It involved a 16-year old girl, Brittney Chambers, who overdosed and died after taking an Ecstasy pill—one with a green clover logo on it—at her own birthday party."

"I had the responsibility to go to Denver to announce the arrest and prosecution of about 30 individuals in an Ecstasy distribution ring. Local law enforcement arrested the perpetrator that distributed that pill. But the DEA was able to identify the organization that brought those pills into the country, and even work our way back to the original source in the Netherlands."

"But what was troubling to me about this case was that after Brittney died, headlines in the newspapers read 'Tainted Ecstasy Kills Teen.' The news story made it seem that Ecstasy alone wasn't enough to kill, only the fact that it was tainted. The fact is, in Brittney's case, it wasn't tainted. It was pure Ecstasy. A friend who was with Brittney when she took the Ecstasy later said, 'I'd heard nothing bad would happen when you took Ecstasy.' This is the kind of knowledge gap we're up against—the belief that Ecstasy is the ultimate low-risk high."

"And the belief that there is a safe way to take it. Consider the situation in Pittsburgh, where another 16-year-old girl, Brandy French, died last year after taking Ecstasy at a concert. It was the first time she had ever tried the drug. While students at her high school are saddened by her death, a school counselor reports that there is still widespread enthusiasm for Ecstasy. The counselor reports that kids say Brandy only died because 'She didn't do it right. She should have drunk more water.'"

*DEA Administrator Asa Hutchinson,
Remarks at School-Based
Drug and Alcohol Conference,
New York City, May 14, 2002*

Getting the Message Out

As part of Operation X-Out, the DEA will hold press conferences and town hall meetings across the country focusing on enforcement and prevention efforts at the local level. We held the first one on November 21, 2002, in San Diego, California, where Director Hutchinson launched Operation X-Out and called attention to the growing problem of Ecstasy & predatory drug abuse. That press conference was followed by a town hall meeting attended by about 300 people from the greater San Diego community. Educators, health experts, students, rape crisis centers, and concerned citizens attended and discussed solutions to the problem in their community. Similar events will follow in 2003.

One example of DEA's commitment toward a national campaign can be found in its recent partnership with the National Foundation of Women Legislators (NFWL). DEA has joined with NFWL in a common cause: educating the American public about the dangers of Ecstasy and predatory drugs. Robin Read, President and CEO of the NFWL, called the partnership, "one of the most innovative programs the NFWL has embarked upon in its 64 year history."

Ecstasy, predatory drug and party drug trafficking and abuse will continue to be a priority for the DEA. Through the development of its national Ecstasy and predatory drug campaign, the DEA will work with educators, prevention specialists, and community action groups to raise awareness and educate America's youth about the dangers of Ecstasy and predatory drugs.

At the same time, DEA Special Agents, as part of Operation X-Out, will continue to target and dismantle the criminal organizations that produce, transport, and distribute these drugs. The DEA's focus will be a balanced approach that combines prevention, education, enforcement, and treatment.



Training Venues

Another important aspect of the DEA's efforts to combat Ecstasy and predatory drugs is training other organizations to join the fight. In fact, the DEA has been out front on this effort for a few years now. In the summer of 2000, the agency hosted the first-ever International Conference on Ecstasy and Club Drugs in partnership with approximately 300 officials from domestic and foreign law enforcement, judicial, chemical, prevention and treatment communities. That was followed by many more conferences across the country that brought together law enforcement, health professionals, treatment providers, educators, and concerned citizens.

In 2002, the DEA held its first-ever training class on drug-facilitated sexual assault. DEA Special Agents were trained in identifying and referring victims of drug-facilitated sexual assault and other crimes of violence. DEA specialists also work closely with local law enforcement and citizen groups to understand and recognize drug-facilitate sexual assault and responses. In addition, the Department of Justice has posted forensic training material on the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) intranet. This material, which is accessible to thousands of federal, state, and local law enforcement officers, enhances the collection and testing of evidence for these cases.

What You Can Do

Don't Become a Victim: Educate Yourself!

Drugs such as Ecstasy, GHB, Ketamine, and Rohypnol, can be used in a predatory manner to facilitate sexual assault and other crimes of violence. These drugs can easily be slipped into a drink and may be completely undetectable. Once consumed, they can incapacitate a potential victim to the point that they suffer memory loss and/or ability to account for a period of time. The individual may be unsure if they were sexually assaulted. When these drugs are used in combination with alcohol, the danger is greatly increased.

The exact effects of these drugs on any specific person are difficult to predict. The results vary depending on the drug, the dose ingested, whether the drug is mixed with alcohol and/or other drugs as well as the weight, gender, and metabolism of the person who ingests it. Further, other factors, including how soon the victim receives medical assistance, may be of consequence.

Whether you are male or female, if you suspect you have been the victim of a predatory drug, take action!



- Don't leave your drink unattended
- Watch out for your friends
- Don't drink out of punch bowls
- Don't drink beverages you did not open
- Don't share drinks

IF YOU SUSPECT YOU ARE A VICTIM OF A PREDATORY DRUG CRIME:

1. Find a safe environment and get help immediately.
2. Call the police and make a report.
3. Seek medical attention. Go to a hospital emergency room as soon as possible for an examination and evidence collection.
4. If you suspect you may have been drugged, ask that a urine sample be taken.
5. If you suspect you may have been raped, ask the hospital to conduct a rape kit exam. Call the National Sexual Assault Hotline or a local rape crisis center for information and support.
6. Preserve as much evidence as possible. Do not urinate, shower, bathe, or throw away any clothing you were wearing during the incident. If possible, save any other materials that might provide evidence - such as the glass that held your drink. Write down any details that you can remember.
7. Be truthful about any drug or alcohol use.

HOW CAN I REDUCE MY RISK?

1. Don't leave your beverage unattended or accept a drink from an open container.
2. Go with friends to parties and clubs. Watch out for each other and leave together.
3. Be aware of your surroundings at all times.
4. Don't become isolated with someone you don't know or trust.
5. Don't rely on a drug/alcohol test kit or product. They may not be accurate.
6. Educate yourself about these drugs!

What can you do to help someone who is using any of these drugs? Be a real friend. Encourage your friend to stop or seek professional help. Save a life!

Helpful Websites

www.dea.gov

www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov

www.drugfreeamerica.org

www.nationalfamilies.org

www.drugabuse.gov

www.samhsa.gov

www.casacolumbia.org

www.health.org

www.projectghb.org

www.rainn.org



www.dea.gov